

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MTN GE 04894 261645Z

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MTN GENEVA 4894

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, GATT

SUBJ: MTN: DISTRIBUTION OF GATT RESTRICTED DOCUMENTS

REF: STATE 141648

1. QUESTIONS IN REFTEL WERE PUT TO H. VAN TUINEN, DIRECTOR, CONFERENCE SERVICES DIVISION, GATT, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DOCUMENT CLASSIFICATION AT GATT SECRETARIAT. ON DISTRIBUTION OF GATT RESTRICTED DOCUMENTS TO MEMBERS OF THE U.S. ADVISORY COMMITTEES, VAN TUINEN INDICATED THAT SUCH DISTRIBUTION IS OUTSIDE GATT SECRETARIAT CONTROL AND IS RESPONSIBILITY OF U.S. GOVERNMENT. SECRETARIAT WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH DISTRIBUTION UNLESS THIS WOULD LEAD TO WIDER CIRCULATION TO PRESS AND OTHER UNAUTHORIZED RECIPIENTS.

2. ACCORDING TO VAN TUINEN, SECRETARIAT HAS NO WRITTEN EXPLANATION OF MEANING OF GATT CLASSIFICATIONS. DOCUMENTS ARE GENERALLY CLASSIFIED BY DRAFTERS OR HIGHER RANKING PERSONNEL FAMILIAR WITH SENSITIVITIES INVOLVED OR AT REQUEST OF CONTRACTING PARTIES. SECRETARIAT EXPECTS NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS TO MAINTAIN CLOSER CONTROL OF DOCUMENTS WITH HIGHER CLASSIFICATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, ONLY A VERY LIMITED NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS CLASSIFIED "SECRET" ARE DISTRIBUTED AND EACH CONTRACTING PARTY MUST SIGN FOR THE COPIES WHICH THEY RECEIVE. VAN TUINEN ESTIMATES THAT, JUDGING BY PREVIOUS NEGOTIATING ROUNDS, MANY MTN DOCUMENTS WILL BE CLASSIFIED "CONFIDENTIAL" AND "SECRET" (THE TWO GATT CLASSIFICATIONS OTHER THAN "RESTRICTED"), AND CONTRACTING PARTIES

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PAGE 02 MTN GE 04894 261645Z

SHOULD SEVERELY LIMIT DISTRIBUTION OF THESE.

3. ALL GATT DOCUMENTS EXCEPT THOSE FOR PUBLICATION OR
FOR RELEASE TO THE PRESS ARE CLASSIFIED AT LEAST RESTRICTED.
NORMALLY, RESTRICTED DOCUMENTS ARE DERESTRICTED AFTER
SIX MONTHS; HOWEVER, ALL DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE MTN
WILL NEVER BE DECLASSIFIED.HARTZELL

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